PSYCHOLOGICAL LITERATURE.

La Doctrine de Spinoza exposée et commentée à la lumière des faits scientifiques. Par ÉMILE FERRIÈRE. Paris, Felix Alcan, Éditeur. Pp. ix + 357.

The list of works already published by M. Ferrière reveals a catholicity of tastes and interests rather depressing to the man who feels that he can do good work only by circumscribing the sphere of his activities and becoming more or less of a specialist. Darwinism, The Medicinal Plants of Burgundy, The Apostles, Paganism among the Hebrews, Scientific Errors in the Bible, Biblical Myths, The Soul and the Functions of the Brain, Matter and Energy, Life and Mind,—these are among the subjects upon which he has found it possible to write '*un fort volume*.' From a work on the etymology of four hundred Christian names used in France, he passes to a study of Spinozism. He admits frankly that it will appear strange in the eyes of the general public that, at the close of a century devoted exclusively to money and material pleasures, a man should be found so devoid of sense as to devote himself to philosophy, above all to Spinozism; but, he exclaims, with a noble indifference to consequences, "cela me laisse tout à fait indifférent." The theories of Spinoza are to be condensed into a few propositions, stripped of all obscurity, and so placed before the reader that a 'coup d'oeil' will suffice to reveal both the details and the system in which they find their unity. At the same time a running commentary will turn upon the Spinozistic doctrine the searching light of contemporary science.

But even a cursory examination of this volume will suffice to console those who feel sensitive regarding their inability to write treatises on Darwinism, the Apostles, the virtues of Medicinal Plants, and the Scientific Errors of the Bible. M. Ferrière need feel no apprehension lest those, who are in a position to judge, accuse him of having devoted an inordinate amount of time to the study of philosophy. His material he has gotten largely from Saisset, and he has not improved it in working it over. From Spinoza himself it is clear that he has gotten little, and he has largely misunderstood that little. Of the

philosophies which preceded Spinozism, and without an understanding of which it is impossible to follow intelligently the reasonings contained in the 'Ethics'—of these, M. Ferrière is palpably ignorant.

The puzzling question of the relation of substance to its attributes, a question over which students of Spinozism have expended no little thought, M. Ferrière settles summarily with an illustration, a 'fait scientifique.' Plaster is composed of sulphuric acid and lime. Here we have a case of substance and attributes. Suppose an infinite universe of plaster; the lime may be regarded as representing the attribute extension, and the sulphuric acid as representing the attribute thought. The combination of the two gives us the one substance with its attributes. *Voilà tout!* (pp. 29–30). Attributes are the *elements* of which substance is composed (p. 32). The difficulty of making plaster of any sort out of such diverse elements as extension and thought were conceived to be in the seventeenth century does not present itself as a difficulty to M. Ferrière's mind. Again, modes are distinguished from attributes in that they are necessarily finite (p. 44). Did M. Ferrière ever read Letter 64 in Spinoza's correspondence? Has he pondered over the significance of the 'fixed and eternal things' of the treatise 'De Intellectus Emendatione'? Still again, it is insisted that Spinoza was an out and out nominalist (pp. 63–73), and as the Spinozistic doctrine of essences is quite overlooked, it is but natural that M. Ferrière should be wholly at sea when he comes to discuss the immortality of the mind. It seems to him that, in this doctrine, Spinoza has arbitrarily stepped beyond the limits of his system, and simply taken up with the beliefs of the vulgar (p. 128). To one who reads Spinoza in this way, the 'Ethics' is and must remain a sealed book, a mere mass of incoherencies.

It is not necessary to criticize M. Ferrière's volume in detail. There is a scientific side to the Spinozistic philosophy which is well worthy of attention even in our day; but it cannot be properly treated by one who has never penetrated Spinoza's thought at all, and whose book fairly bristles with statements which can be categorically denied by citations from Spinoza's writings. If the volume on the Medicinal Plants of Burgundy contains as many errors as this one, it must have been the unhappy occasion of many a colic and of much Gallic profanity. As for the Apostles, if they have been misrepresented as has Spinoza, they have just grounds for an action at law against the author.

G. S. F.

La Nouvelle Monadologie. CH. RENOUVIER et L. PRAT. Paris, Colin et C^ie^. 1899. Pp. 546.

Of the dual authorship of this work it would be difficult to find any evidence in the work itself beyond the title-page: the hand may be the hand of Prat, but the voice is the voice of Renouvier. At the close of a long life, the accomplished and venerated master of an influential philosophical school sums up, in collaboration with one of his disciples, the positive elements of his teaching in a compact system. Such appears to be the historical significance of this important treatise: it contains the constructive doctrine of the French critical philosophy.

This doctrine allies itself by its very title with the 'dogmatic' metaphysics of Leibnitz. In spite of the many elements derived from Kant, the method is also to a large extent what Kant would have regarded as dogmatic. The groundwork of the system, closely examined, is the affirmation of the theses, to the exclusion of the antitheses, of the Kantian antinomies. Thus it is held (1) that the world is composed of simple substances; (2) that it is finite; (3) that it contains free agents; and (4) that it originated in the creative act of a supreme First Cause. And the logical principle on which each of these propositions rests is that which essentially underlies Kant's argument for each of the theses of his antinomies, namely, the impossibility of thinking the actual number of terms in any given series as infinite.

It is impossible, however, to accept these results on this ground. The abstract principle is indeed unassailable: an actual number cannot be infinite. But this principle, when applied to the series of conditions thought of as determining any conditioned element in experience, conflicts, as Kant showed in the arguments for the antitheses, with another, the necessity, namely, of always going beyond any given term n of the series to the next, $n + 1$. Now our authors, following Aristotle, explain the appearance of an antinomy here by distinguishing between the actual and the possible number; thus, we are told, the number of actual events which have occurred in the world is finite, but there is no assignable limit to the number which may hereafter take place. But why not? If time can have a beginning, it may also have an end. The possibility, therefore, of an endless succession of events in the future is not real and concrete, but merely the abstract possibility of thinking the progressive series continually added to. But this is precisely the case with the regressive synthesis of past events as conditions for any given event. For it is impossible to conceive of any event, however remote, as without a precedent event as its condi-

tion. Our authors deny this: the cause of an event, they say, need not be an antecedent event. But even granting that there are causes of events which are not events at all, neither antecedent nor coexisting, that which determines any event to its place in the time-series must be an antecedent event; for time, in its aspect of succession, is merely the abstraction of the succession of events. If we think of the time before any given event as empty, if, *e. g.*, we try to think of a first event, we hypostasize an abstraction; and the same difficulty occurs if we try to think of the beginning of time, for the first beginning of time would be itself an event. Our authors object that to think the series of past events as infinite is to suppose them illusory, which is repugnant to good sense. But surely it is the nature of the reality of the time-series which, among other things, this dilemma of thought brings in question.

Two cardinal ideas in the system are individuality and freedom. The existence of simple substances is regarded as a datum implied in the existence of compound substances. It is rightly inferred that a simple substance cannot be extended; hence it is determined as a monad by internal or qualitative relations. But what is the ground of the argument from the existence of compound substances as given to the existence of simple substances as also given? Not, surely, the correlativity of the terms, for on that ground we might also conclude from the existence of the relative the existence of the absolute, an inference which the authors reject. Hence the logical ground can only be, it would seem, here as in the previous case, the impossibility of thinking an actual series unlimited—the argument for the thesis of the second antinomy. But what compound substances are taken as given? Surely not substances compounded of monads, for this would beg the whole metaphysical question. Extended substances, then, *i. e.*, bodies. But if bodies are held to be compound substances, it is because they are regarded as composed, not of immaterial entities, but of smaller bodies. And this leads to the endless series—the argument of the antithesis.

The same principle—the contradiction in the conception of an infinite series—is urged in support of the doctrine of freedom, and also in support of what might seem to imperil it, the doctrine of a creative First Cause. But in the matter of freedom, at any rate, the authors advance beyond this argument; for, after defending ably and at length the possibility of freedom, as over against universal mechanical determinism, they finally assert the fact of freedom as a 'rational belief' motived by its appeal to the sentiment of duty and the interests attaching to personality. This puts the belief on substantially the Kantian

foundation. The discussion would have gained by a clearer exposition at the outset of the conception of freedom, which seems to fluctuate between that of an originative, absolutely spontaneous, cause of phenomena, the power of contrary choice and the hegemonic function of the intelligence. But probably all three moments are meant to be included.

The above are among the principal topics discussed in the earlier parts of the book, entitled respectively, The Monad, Organization, Mind, Passion and Will. Towards the end of the last named part the 'rational belief' in freedom and morality is connected in the practical reason with the belief in goodness and in individual and social ideals and is made the ground of belief in the moral perfection of God. This leads to the discussions in the remaining parts under the headings, Societies and Justice. The central theme here is the contradiction between the above-mentioned beliefs and the actual order of things in our experience. The pessimistic aspects of the world are depicted with startling effect. It is maintained that this world is radically incompatible with the realization of our ideals, that a perfect society on earth is not merely morally, but physically, impossible, no matter how long time we allow. But a world thus unjust in its very constitution cannot, it is held, be the work of a perfect Creator. The problem then is to explain this present so evil world in agreement with the principles of the monadology and with the postulates of the practical reason. The theory advanced is in substance as follows: The monads were originally created perfect and formed together a perfect world. There was no superfluous unorganized matter, but only such as was necessary to supply the needs of organisms, and the physical medium in which the latter lived was an elastic fluid of a density appropriate to their use. The physical forces were disposable in the most useful manner at the will of man. The families of men possessed the highest social organization, and, except perhaps in the case of plants, there was neither generation nor decay. This state of things was brought to an end by the selfish exercise of free-will. This destroyed not only the social, but the physical harmony. The evil, small at first, gradually grew, till at length, in a war of titans, the primitive world went to smash. The nebulous matter with which our present world begins was the result of this stupendous break-up. In this matter were contained the germs of the later developed organisms, psychically one with the monads of the earlier time. Subject to the laws of the new order, subject to birth and death and to all manner of physical and social inequalities, the human race is here suffering retribution and

undergoing discipline. The justice in each individual life must be assumed, but cannot be seen because of the complexity of the conditions, past, present and future. The process of retribution and education is to continue, here or elsewhere, till, in the remote future, timed presumably to the completion of the work, the catastrophe foreseen by science brings to a close the present world-order in an immense conflagration. Then "new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." Such is the authors' conception of the drama of the world as it is unfolding itself through the acts of free agents in accordance with the consciously predetermined creative plan.

Comment on this conception, the likeness and contrast of which both to the Leibnitzian Theodicy and to the views current in orthodox Christian theology are manifest, would here seem to be superfluous. The surprising thing is that all this audacious speculation should be made to appear as reasonable as it does. Some of its most startling features seem to follow as legitimate deductions from the principles developed in the earlier part of the work, while others present themselves as plausible interpretations of many of the facts of experience. But this is very different from a metaphysics that moves in the sure path of science. Speculatively, the radical defect of the scheme seems to be that God and the created monads are brought into no sort of intimate relation. A finite number of monads created a vast number of ages ago are left to work out, without miracle, their own destiny. Why, under the given terms, God should not interpose on occasion, is not evident. If, on the other hand, God is thus otiose so far as the destinies of the world are concerned, it is not apparent why he is needed in the scheme of things at all. Why not regard the monads as individually eternal beings? The truth, however, is that the method by which the monads are themselves posited is vitiated at the start by dogmatic assumptions. It refuses to accept the lesson of the antinomies and it ignores the method of transcendentalism. But this latter method also has not succeeded in convincing the world that it leads to the solution of the ultimate question concerning the relation of the universe to the individual, of the one to the many, and in the end it must be confessed that a book like this, which is honest and able, contributes to our interest both in philosophy and in life, even though we may believe that our best hope of results lies along other paths of investigation. It will at least help to stimulate the new interest in personality.

H. N. GARDINER.

SMITH COLLEGE.

Interprétation Sociale et Morale des principes du Développement Mental—Étude de Psycho-Sociologie. J. M. BALDWIN. Traduit sur la seconde edition anglaise par G. L. DUPRAT. Paris, Giard & Brière. 1899. Pp. vi+580.

This is a translation of Professor Baldwin's 'Social and Ethical Interpretations.' It is, indeed, to be regretted that Professor Baldwin's remarkable work should have gone into French at the hands of so careless an interpreter as M. Duprat appears to be. His knowledge of the English language does not seem very thorough. We have noticed, in fact, gross mistakes in the translation. To give one instance, M. Duprat translates 'fruste' for 'crude' (p. 9), which is just the contrary of what the author means ('crude' means immature and 'fruste' worn out). We have noticed words which are not French, *e. g.*, 'réflexive' for 'reflective' (pp. 217, 219, 241 *et passim*). In various places the author's thought is so obscured that one must turn to the original in order to understand what is meant. M. Duprat has also a peculiar way of solving the difficulty of rendering into readable French the somewhat complex style of Professor Baldwin; he suppresses entire passages. We have noticed that in different parts of the book.

Why has the title of the book—already somewhat lengthy in English—been 'stuffed' with superfluous words in the translation, thus rendering it longer and less comprehensible? Is not 'Aspect Éthique et Sociale du Développement Mental' a simpler and clearer way of rendering the original title in French than 'Interprétation Sociale et Morale des principes du Développement Mental'? The reader will easily see that the word 'principes' is superfluous and misleading.

As is usual with European books, especially French, there is no index, and the original contents table has been shortened to indicate only the heads of the chapters, suppressing any mention of the sections as given in the American edition. This means unavoidable and vexatious delays in the perusal of the book.

In conclusion, we do not believe that this poor translation will help to vulgarize Professor Baldwin's doctrines among French students. Doubtless, many of them will find the author's English more intelligible than M. Duprat's French. Decidedly, M. Duprat is just the kind of translator to whom the Italian epigram might be applied: "Traduttore, traditore."

GUSTAVO TOSTI.

NEW YORK CITY.